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Burmese AP4

Accordingly, we paddle about here and there, and whenever we come across the little canoe flying the flag that marks R——'s brokers, sundry signs pass, which result in three great paddy-boats mounting the red flag too. They presently weigh anchor, and drop up to the mill. R—— is a smart man of business, and is very scornful about the representatives of several other firms, who lounge on the bank, smoking cheroots, and throwing sticks into the water for their dogs to fetch out. It is not directly a matter of money that is in question. The cultivators know pretty well what they are about, though you might not think it when you hear a man refuse ninety-two rupees a hundred baskets, and afterwards settle with a broker for eighty-eight. Those passes with the finger on the nose meant a good deal more than appeared. Another brick in the bottom of the basket, a three-inch batten wedged in somewhere, was the significance of that wink which sent the broker off in such a hurry.

At last it is over. There are no more boats to be had; and we are not sorry to turn back, for the sun throws its beams fiercely back from the water in a way that gets below the broadest solah hat. R—— is in great glee: "Thirteen boats, by George! Next best to the Imperial Firm; and then there's the launch to come back." The Imperial Firm is the biggest concern in Rangoon, and has sometimes as much as a lakh out for "advance boats," *i.e.* money paid to cultivators before the rice has been planted out from the nurseries, or perhaps even before it has been sown at all. The launch about which R—— is so solicitous went away last night far up the Pegu River to intercept boats coming down with paddy for sale. There are sometimes great bargains to be made in this way. The boatmen have come a long distance, and are tired with paddling. The tide is making strong when the steam-launch comes up. There is the welcome prospect of an end to their labours, and above all there are no outbidding rivals to interfere. R—— instituted the system, and for a day or two had the game all to himself; but now the other firms have got wind of it, and there are sometimes famous races for a big boat, which must somewhat astonish the simple jungle wallâhs, and certainly do not reduce the demands of the hleshin, the owner of the

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boat. R—— is in luck this morning. We have hardly gone a hundred yards when the "Mah Hlah" comes puffing round the point behind us, with a boat on either side, and three towing astern.

And now we have got back to the mill. The Burmans are discharging their paddy, which is stowed in bulk, into a big cargo boat. The regulation basket is in use, and we do not peer too inquisitively into the bottom of it. The owner of the boat is perched on the lofty carved stern of his craft, and placidly smokes a great cheroot. Presently he will come down and make his way to the office, where he will get a great pile of rupees to carry off, tied in the end of his paso. The greater number of them will probably find their way into the hands of the oily chetty, who is squatting on the bank there. The rest our hleshin will most likely gamble away.

Meanwhile, a long string of coolies is carrying the paddy from the lighter into the godown, a gigantic shed where there is already a mountain of grain. We skirt round it, and go to the other side. There a few hundred more coolies are running off with more baskets to the mill. The paddy is thrown into huge receptacles on the basement, winnowed, carried up in lifts to the top of the house, three stories high, where it is first of all passed over a long sieve. Here the stalks, leaves, stones, and stumps of cheroots are separated from the grain, which is then passed between two revolving stones, just sufficiently wide apart to grind off the outer husk without breaking the seed. Then it is rewinnowed in fanners, and passed over finer sieves, where the broken grains fall through, while the part-cleaned rice goes on to fresh stones. It is found that perfectly clean rice will not stand the long sea voyage, and the grain as it is sent in the sailing ship has still the inner pellicle, and is mixed with about twenty per cent of unhusked rice. This is what is technically known as "five parts cargo rice," or simply "cargo rice." Since so many steamers have begun to go through the Suez Canal, the amount of "white rice" milled in the province has been steadily increasing. Rice of a specially fine quality, with a glaze on the surface, is manufactured for Italy. Clouds of rice-dust float all over the mill, and settle every-

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mortar and measurers, market basket, condiments stored in cigarette tins and quart bottles. A discussion on these subjects is found under the chapter on Food.

Details were secured on the following household items:

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SAUNG (blankets). Both THA-KA-LAT SAUNG (flannel blanket) and GUN SAUNG (Cotton blanket) are actually woolen blankets. (cost Rs. 25/-). Heavy cotton blankets are called CHI SAUNG. (cost Rs. 15/-). Both are for individual use. In Pathwe U Myaing had one blanket of each kind which would last 3 or 4 years. In camp he has only the GUN SAUNG or Upper Burma blanket which he used for 2 years then brought from Pathwe. The females of the family had 6 cotton blankets between them (cost Rs. 12/ each). They brought 4 from Pathwe, two are "good ones", and two are "torn ones". The cotton blankets are supposed to last for 2 years according to Ma Aye Myaing. Intense love is indicated by the

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saying "we will go under one blanket", but double blankets are not known.

HMWE-YAR, (Enjoying place) mattress. It is a thin square cloth sack measuring 4 TAUNG on a side by 4 inches in thickness and stuffed with KAPOK. U Myaing had one at Pathwe which would last 7 or 8 years. It was made at home and valued at Rs. 30/-. Daw Aw Zar

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and the children shared a double mattress, a gift from her neice, in Pathwe but all sleep on split cane mats only in camp.

(KU DIN; raised wooden beds are rarely used in villages.)

GAUNG-ON, (head-lay) pillow. Pillows are made at home. Two may be made from 3 TAUNG (1½ yards) of cloth. They are cloth sacks filled with cotton and last 3 or 4 years - valued at Rs. 3/8 each. U Myaing had 2, and the females 8 at Pathwe. He used a wooden pillow made of small, raised board, while the females use rag bundles.

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HPYAR, Sleeping mats. Two kinds are used; a split TA BAW plant mat and a more finely woven thin plant with over 2 under 2 weave mat. They measure 6 by 3½ feet. The mats lasted two years and were woven at home. 4 to 8 mats were kept on hand at Pathwe; here 4 mats are in use.

AYAR-KIN (sleeping place cover) bed sheet: The bedsheet s used in Pathwe measured 6' by 3½' and were made of cotton. Three were used by U Myaing and lasted a year; they cost Rs. 7/- each. Camp: none.

CHIN TAUNG, Mosquito net: One kind was made of fine netted